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Mr. MOYNIHAN. I reserve the remainder of my time as I believe we are going to try to go to a concluding measure here.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, first, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished Senator from Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas is recognized.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Thank you, Mr. President. I thank the distinguished chairman of the committee for the wonderful job that he has done. It is never easy to make such changes as we are making in this bill. But it is one of the most important decisions that we will make, because it is one of the key elements to change the direction of this country as it relates to welfare and to allow us to balance the budget.

We have heard a lot of talk this afternoon and this evening about helping children. Mr. President, if we are going to help the children of this country, the most important thing we can do is balance the budget. We cannot balance the budget unless we put welfare on a budget. If we do not put welfare on a budget, we will not be able to do what is right for this country.

I am voting yes on this conference report for two reasons: We must take welfare off entitlement status and, Mr. President, we have talked all day and all night about the President saying he is going to veto this bill. There is one reason he is going to veto this bill. It is because we are taking welfare off entitlement status and putting it on a budget. That is the fundamental difference between the President and those of us who are going to support this bill.

This bill does not cut welfare spending. This bill slows the rate of growth of welfare spending from 5.8 percent to 4.02 percent, less than 2 percentage points of difference in the rate of growth. We are going to spend more on welfare. But the difference is we are going to put some parameters around it. We are going to give the States the right to have a welfare program that fits the needs of their States.

Mr. President, my Governor, George Bush, says, "What are they talking about, hurting the children? Do they think I am going to have starving children in my home State?"

My Governor is a graduate of Yale. I mean, it is not the University of Texas, but it is OK. I think he is enlightened. I think he can handle the job, and I think every other Governor in the United States of America knows best what will fit their State's needs.

This is going to make some monumental changes in the priorities we have. We have heard tonight Senators

saying, "What are the priorities of this country?" We are going to decide.

The priorities of this country are that we want to help people who need a transition for a temporary period, and that is what this bill does. Can people stay on welfare if they are able-bodied and do not have young children under 6? They cannot do it forever. No, they cannot. They cannot stay on it generation to generation. They have to work after 2 years and they have a lifetime limitation of 5 years.

What does that tell working people of this country, especially the working poor? It says there is an incentive for you to do what is right. No longer are you going to have to support people who can work but will not. If you can work and do, if you consider it a privilege to work and contribute to the economy of this country, you will not be subsidizing people who can work and do not.

We have talked about what is a block grant and what is not a block grant. We are going to put AFDC on a block grant with growth. There is a formula that allows for the growth States to have a fair allocation. But there still is a safety net, Mr. President. There is a safety net in food stamps, in child nutrition. Those will not be block granted. Those are going to be based on need. So food and nutrition programs are a safety net, and they are kept in the bill as a safety net.

Mr. President, we are going to set the priorities of our country with this bill. We are going to say to the working people of this country that it is worth something to work, it is a privilege in this country to have a job and to contribute to the economy and you are not going to be competing with someone who refuses to work even if they can. The working people of this country are going to know that we have a budget and that this is not going to be unlimited spending.

Mr. President, I know that my time is up, and I will just say that we are making decisions that will determine the priorities of our country and we are going to get this country back on track and we are going to bring back what made this country great.

It was the strong families, it was the spirit of entrepreneurship and the working relationships that have built this country. We are going to bring it back and make this country strong again.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor and thank the chairman.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I yield the remainder of my time to the distinguished Senator from Pennsylvania.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized for 18 minutes, 52 seconds.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I want to thank the distinguished chairman of the committee who has done an absolutely superb job with this piece of legislation in shepherding it through the conference. It has been a pleasure to work with him in the time we have

worked on the welfare bill since he has become chairman.

For the benefit of the staff here, I am going to do the wrap-up and then proceed with my remarks after the wrap-up.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, as of the close of business yesterday, December 20, the Federal debt stood at \$4,988,966,775,602.69, a little more than \$11 billion shy of the \$5 trillion mark, which the Federal debt will exceed in a few weeks.

On a per capita basis, every man, woman, and child in America owes \$18,938.20 as his or her share of that debt.

HONORING JOHN C. STENNIS

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Senator John C. Stennis, for whom our Nation's newest aircraft carrier is named. Further, I include in today's RECORD the excellent remarks given by the Secretary of Defense, William Perry, and Senator THAD COCHRAN, the two principal speakers at the commissioning of this great ship on December 9, 1995.

Built with the minds, hands, and sweat of thousands of workers at Newport News Shipbuilding, and manned by the men and women of the most powerful Navy in today's world, this ship serves as an symbol of peace, that will stand guard night and day on the seven seas deterring aggression. As a former sailor in World War II, Secretary of the Navy, and now a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I know well the awesome capabilities of these magnificent ships.

In my brief remarks to an impressive audience of over ten thousand people who braved a wintery day, I recalled how, as I worked by his side for over a decade, Senator Stennis would relate stories of how a succession of Presidents would say "Whenever I was awakened in the middle of the night by a report of a crisis somewhere in the world, my first thoughts were always 'Where is the nearest U.S. aircraft carrier?'"

Mr. President, it is fitting that this great ship bears the name of Senator Stennis. Senator Stennis was my friend and mentor, whose humble beginnings in a small working-class home and equally humble and proud manner in which he lived his entire life, stand in stark contrast to this magnificent ship that now bears his name. He was a true visionary and champion of our Nation's